

New Spy Case Rocks Britain

By John Beaufort

Chief of the London Bureau of *The Christian Science Monitor*

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With the Vassall spy report due for debate next week in the House of Commons, a new espionage case has hit the British headlines.

At the same time, a central intelligence agency (similar to the United States's CIA) is being urged for Great Britain.

Lord Radcliffe, chairman of the tribunal which conducted the Vassall inquiry, is said to have submitted an additional report to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan recommending tightened security procedures.

The government already is understood to have issued rigorous new regulations covering social contacts between civil servant and Communist embassy employees here.

Italian Charged

Meanwhile Dr. Giuseppe Gilberto Martelli, an Italian nuclear physicist now awaiting trial in Brixton Prison, was arrested late Friday night upon his return by air to this country from Belgium.

A Euratom scientist, the tall Italian was on loan to Britain's Harwell atomic research establishment. He has been at Culham, a branch of Harwell, where he has been working on a nonclassified project involving commercial and industrial uses of nuclear energy.

According to John Adams, director of the Culham laboratories, there are no secrets at this Harwell offshoot. Culham was established as an "open" research station in order to have "a free exchange of information with all countries," said Mr. Adams.

Arrest Scheduled

Complete secrecy surrounded the arrest and questioning of Dr. Martelli by Special Branch officers.

Remanded in custody until May 6, he is being held without bail charged with having violated the Official Secrets Act, 1911 and 1920. The violations are alleged to have occurred between Sept. 23, 1960, and April 4, 1963.

The applicable section of the 1911 Act covers the obtaining,

collecting, recording, or communicating of secrets which might be useful to an enemy. The maximum penalty is 14 years in prison.

The arrest of Dr. Martelli occurred shortly after the publication of the report of the Radcliffe tribunal on the Vassall case. The report has aroused new anxiety in Britain over how well the nation's secrets are being protected.

Dissatisfaction with the current security regulations will be fully aired in the House of Commons debate expected to begin May 7.